What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method for providing remote performance management to increase the performance of applications executing in a distributed fashion within a computer network, comprising the steps of:

   (1) receiving a request from a server within the computer network, said request specifying an application and the address of a client within said computer network;

   (2) connecting to said client within said computer network;

   (3) downloading, to said client, application data that contains profile information about said application; and

   (4) downloading, to said client, control logic capable of using the information in said application data to determine a set of modifications to said client;

   wherein said client can apply said control logic to make said set of modifications thereby allowing said application to more fully utilize the processing capabilities of the nodes within the computer network.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein step (1) is performed in response to said server receiving a request from said client for content via said application.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said set of modifications include at least one of the following:

   (i) modifications to said application executing on said client;

   (ii) modifications to the operating system running on said client; and

   (iii) modifications to the hardware within said client.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said computer network is at least a portion of the Internet.

5.   The method of claim 4, wherein the address of said client is an Internet Protocol (IP) address.

6.   The method of claim 5, wherein said control logic downloaded to said client in step (4) is contained in a Java applet capable of making said set of modification by making a call to a dynamically linked library (DLL) on said server.

7.   A method for providing a user with remote performance management capabilities to increase the performance of applications executing in a distributed fashion within a computer network, comprising the steps of:

        (1)   receiving a selection input from the user via a graphical user interface, said selection specifying a client within the computer network and an application that executes within the computer network;

        (2)   accessing an application database that contains profile data on said application;

        (3)   accessing a system database that contains configuration data about said client within the computer network;

        (4)   accessing control logic that uses said application data and said system data to determine a set of modifications;

        (5)   connecting to said client; and

        (6)   downloading, to said client, said application data and a portion of said control logic;

        wherein said client can apply said portion of said control logic to make said set of modifications thereby allowing said application to more fully utilize the processing capabilities of the nodes within the computer network.

8.   The method of claim 8, wherein said computer network is at least a portion of the Internet.

9.   The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of:

accessing a security database to determine whether the user is authorized to perform the selection of step (1).

10.   A system for providing remote performance management to increase the performance of applications executing in a distributed fashion within a computer network, comprising:

(a)   an application database that contains profile information on an application that executes within the computer network;

(b)   a system database that contains configuration information about a client computer within the computer network;

(c)   control logic that uses said application database and said system database to determine a set of modifications;

(d)   means for receiving a request from a content server within the computer network, said request specifying said application and the address of said client computer;

(e)   means for connecting to said client computer; and

(f)   means for downloading, to said client computer, data from said application database and a portion of said control logic;

wherein said client computer can apply said portion of said control logic to make said set of modifications thereby allowing said application to more fully utilize the processing capabilities of the nodes within the computer network.

11.   The system of claim 10, wherein said computer network is at least a portion of the Internet.

12. The system of claim 10, wherein said set of modifications include at least one of the following:

    (i)   modifications to said application executing on said client computer;

    (ii)   modifications to the operating system running on said client computer; and

    (iii)   modifications to the hardware within said client computer.

13. A computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having control logic stored therein for causing a computer to provide remote performance management to increase the performance of applications executing in a distributed fashion within a computer network, said control logic comprising:

first computer readable program code means for causing the computer to receive a request from a server within the computer network, said request specifying an application and the address of a client within said computer network;

second computer readable program code means for causing the computer to connect to said client within said computer network;

third computer readable program code means for causing the computer to download, to said client, application data that contains profile information about said application;

fourth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to download, to said client, control logic capable of using the information in said application data to determine a set of modifications to said client;

wherein said client can apply said control logic to make said set of modifications thereby allowing said application to more fully utilize the processing capabilities within the computer network.

14.   The computer program product of claim 13, wherein said set of modifications include at least one of the following:

       (i)   modifications to said application executing on said client;

       (ii)   modifications to the operating system running on said client; and

       (iii)   modifications to the hardware within said client.

15.   The computer program product of claim 13, wherein said control logic is contained in a Java applet capable of making said set of modification by making a call to a dynamically linked library (DLL) on said server.

16.   A computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having control logic stored therein for causing a computer to provide a user with remote performance management capabilities to increase the performance of applications executing in a distributed fashion within a computer network, said control logic comprising:

first computer readable program code means for causing the computer to receive a selection input from the user via a graphical user interface, said selection specifying a client within the computer network and an application that executes within the computer network;

second computer readable program code means for causing the computer to access an application database that contains profile data on said application;

third computer readable program code means for causing the computer to access a system database that contains configuration data about said client within the computer network;

fourth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to access control logic that uses said application data and said system data to determine a set of modifications;

fifth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to connect to said client; and

sixth computer readable program code means for causing the computer to download, to said client, said application data and a portion of said control logic;

wherein said client can apply said portion of said control logic to make said set of modifications thereby allowing said application to more fully utilize the processing capabilities of the nodes within the computer network.